

## ELIPH' HEWLITT, PIRATE

How Jarby's Encyclopedia Tamed a Pirate Crew and Gave a Boost to Female Suffrage for Women. . .

BY ELLIS PARKER BUTLER.

"If I wanted that book I'd buy it," said Miss Hinkley, setting her hard-looking mouth firmly, "and I'd like to see any man say I shouldn't. I know very well that Mrs. Beem is scared to death of her husband, and I'm not surprised that she let him dictate to her whether she should buy it or not, but I ain't that way. I wasn't made president of the Ladies' Female Suffrage for Women society for no such reason as that. It was because I know my rights and have got gumption enough to stick up for them, men or no men. But I don't want that book, and the reason is that I ain't got time to read it. My official duties takes all my time."

"I should think they would," said Eliph' Hewlitt, with a sympathetic little cough. "Getting the right to vote for ladies is a big job. It takes lots of work and lots of time, just like it did when A to Z indexed and classified. Price only \$5, \$1 down and \$1 a month until paid."

"Mebby it does and mebbey it doesn't," said Miss Hinkley, "though I don't blame you for praising up what you've got to sell. But it hasn't got anything to do with getting votes for women, and I don't want it."

The little book agent looked. Miss Hinkley calmly in the face through his spectacles.

"You would be surprised, wouldn't you, if I was to tell you that the day I left New York a committee of the Anti-Female Suffrage society came to me and begged me to give up selling this grand book? Yes'm," Eliph' Hewlitt, he said, "ain't you a man and a brother? Ain't it for the good of us men to stand together and keep the ladies in the kitchen, where they belong? Please sell something else, but if you will sell this grand work in one volume, published by Jarby & Goss, don't, we beg of you, sell it to ladies! We ask it as a special favor, for with this superb volume in their hands they would have the whole wisdom of the known world in handy form for instant reference and would be not only our equals, which they are already, but our superiors. At that," said Eliph' Hewlitt, "I snook my head. 'Gents,' I said, 'I must and will sell this volume, neatly bound in cloth, with a frontispiece in three colors, to the ladies of this country. To sell it to the men I do not care, but in my humble way selling this book to the ladies is my life work. If, gents, I said, you had been a pirate, as I have, you would want the ladies to vote and to bring their refining influences into use and to circulate from pole to pole, making elections as polite and elegant as a plink tea at the Brooklyn bridge. 'Then, gentlemen, did you credit,' said Miss Hinkley."

"Yes'm," admitted Eliph' Hewlitt, "but I only spoke what I believed. 'Gents,' I said, 'if you had been a pirate on the tossing seas, as I have, and if you had

seen the way things was run on that pirate ship before and after ladies took a hand in running it, you would look at the votes-for-ladies business in a different way from what you do. You couldn't help it. And you would see, as I do, that the only thing needed is to hand each and every female one copy of Jarby's Encyclopedia of Knowledge and Compendium of Literature, Science and Art to make the world a garden of joy."

"Them was strong words to use to men as dead set against us voting as them men was," said Miss Hinkley. "I felt it my duty to speak up strong," said Eliph' Hewlitt, "hoping thereby to win them from error. I done my duty as I seen it, and as I've done it ever since I was converted by what I seen on the good ship Flying Hen. I use the words 'good ship' as meaning how it was built."

"I've heard as how pirate ships was awful places," said Miss Hinkley.

"Words cannot tell how bad," said Eliph' Hewlitt. "The captain was a constant user of cigarettes, and them men after dinner would keep sitting around the table playing dominoes for money. And all the time they was caressing that way their poor wives was locked in the ship's basement. There them poor women had to stay, week in and week out, and was never allowed on deck for fresh air or to take part in any of the elections."

"How come the pirates to have elections?" asked Miss Hinkley.

"To choose new officers," explained Eliph' Hewlitt. "The excitement of the life was always too much for one or two poor fellows and they would drop down dead of heart disease. When it was common pirates we did nothing but toss them over the banister, but if they happened to be officers, we had to have an election to fill the office. So we voted. It was a hard life, but it was a merry one, and nearly all hands drank beer and smoked in most any part of the ship that they had a mind to. I rose right up from the ranks, being elected janitor first and then floor manager and then general superintendent of the whole ship, which was a hard job because it was my work to keep things tidy, and the ship did get so mussy in a fight. Nobody wanted to do the sweeping and dusting. As I look around this tidy room," added Eliph' Hewlitt, as he looked kindly at her through his spectacles, "Miss Hinkley, it makes me sick to think how careless that ship looked on some days. Mebby you won't believe it, but the windows wasn't washed for weeks at a time, and the hold wasn't house cleaned once."

"I can believe it," said Miss Hinkley, "but I don't see why the women wasn't let up out of the basement to tidy up the place."

"Because we was afraid of them—that's the truth!" said Eliph' Hewlitt. "We was afraid they would claim their rights and ask to be let vote, and so many of the pirates had been killed off that the women was in a majority and could have run things to suit themselves if they had had any sense, which they hadn't. I never saw such an ignorant lot of ladies, but that was all

you could expect of wives of pirates. So we kept the ladies locked down in the basement, and I did my best to keep the ship cleaned up, but it wasn't no use, for there was dirt everywhere, and the pirates always tracking in mud with their muddy boots—"

"What's that?" asked Miss Hinkley, sharply. "Where did they track that mud from?"

Eliph' Hewlitt hesitated for but a moment. Then he smiled pleasantly at Miss Hinkley. "From the dirt that the cross-trees grows in," he said.

"But why should he make that ships

had soil aboard," said Miss Hinkley.

"What do you suppose every ship has a yard for?" inquired Eliph' Hewlitt. "Well, things got worse and worse.



The masts was all cobwebs and some days all the crew laid around smoking, and everything was going to racky ruin as fast as it could, just as it is in another way in this country of ours today. There was big need of new laws on that ship and of some firm but kind hands to run things, and gradually we all come to see it, but we never once thought of the ladies in the basement as fit to do it. We voted one man into office and then voted him out again and another one in, but no good come of all our changes, until one day we run across a ship that was bound from New York to San Francisco, and we keel hauled alongside and took her. You had ought to hear our captain, who was a very profane man, swear

when he found out what that ship was loaded with. Nothing but books!"

"I suppose he only wanted gold," said Miss Hinkley.

"Just so," said Eliph' Hewlitt. "Our

license only allowed us to take gold

and jewels, but we had got so careless

on board our ship by that time that we

didn't abide by the law at all. The

captain was going to throw that whole

curse of books overboard when I spoke

up. 'Captain,' I said, 'some books are

worth money. If there is any first fol-

ios of Shakespeare in that shipload of

books we can get good money for

them.' The captain swore. 'Jimmie

Crickets,' he said, 'there ain't no first

editions in this lot. Near as I can make

out this whole ship is loaded with the

sixty-fourth edition of 'Jarby's Encyclopedia of Knowledge and Compendium of Literature, Science and Art,' and overboard she goes!" With that he

chucked one into the briny deep, but I

put my hand on his arm. 'Captain,' I

said, 'I never heard of that book, but

think of the ladies locked down in the

basement of our own ship. Mebby

these books would wile away their tedious

hours. Suppose we save one copy

for each of the ladies?' So we did."

Eliph' Hewlitt paused to let Miss

Hinkley ask a leading question, but

she did not seem inclined to speak. He

took the sample copy that he had been

holding on his knee and opened it so

that Miss Hinkley could see the al-

legorical frontispiece in three colors.

"You didn't all run off to get away from them pink teas, did you?" asked

Miss Hinkley. "It sounds a little like

it to me."

"No, ma'am," said Eliph' Hewlitt,

"our object was as stated, and this

book can only be had by subscription

of the agents, \$5 a volume, \$1 down

and \$1 a month until paid."

"I guess I can get along without

it," said Miss Hinkley. "We women

will get our rights without buying

books of old book agents. Some towns

let us vote at some elections already."

"Yes'm," said Eliph' Hewlitt. "These

are the towns where I had sold the la-

diest copies of this book."

## The Case of the Decoy Letter.

The central office man furtively watched the fellow for several minutes, is aspect and actions being of the sort to quickly attract the professional instincts of a Mulberry street detective. Coleman first had seen him dodge quickly from the side door of a saloon in Chambers street, then had lost him around the nearest corner, only to sight him again in the gutter, near the masonry of the great Brooklyn bridge. He did not appear quite a vagabond, this fellow, yet not far from it. His baggy trousers were frayed, his coat dirty and ragged, while the rusty-black derby, drawn about his ears, was of a vintage of long ago. Bent nearly double, he was searching for something in the narrow street, now probing into a crevice between the pavements, now furtively picking at something in the gutter, and all the while too absorbed to notice the occasional passers-by. Yet three he glanced sharply toward the mail under the bridge, as if the insure that no eye was upon him from that direction.

Coleman's curiosity presently got the better of him. He strode nearer the fellow, halting just behind him, and bluntly demanded:

"What have you lost, my man?"

"My man," peered up over his bowed shoulder, then indulged in a curious smirk through his unkempt beard.

"Not my way, mister. Did you think I had?" he rejoined, with sly insolence.

"I think you'd better give me a civil answer, or you may be questioned in quarters less agreeable," frowned Coleman.

"Oh, ho! A plain clothes chap, eh?"

"That calls the turn."

"Well, I've lost nothing."

"For what are you waiting, mister?"

"For what I've found the most of, mister. You don't see any bits like these in the gutter about here, do you?"

And with a leer the fellow now displayed in the palm of his grimy hand numerous fragments of paper, more or less soiled, as if a written sheet had been torn into small pieces and thrown away.

"Why are you picking up that trash?" demanded Coleman.

"Not because I'm a scavenger, mister."

"For what, then? See here, my man, you'd better—"

"Not too noisy, Jimmie, if it's all the same to you," now came the interruption, with a subdued chuckle. "Drop around into Pine street about 3 o'clock, and I then may have this trash in shape to answer you intelligently. So long, Jimmie! Take a turn the other way, old chap, since many know us for running mates."

"Well, may I be everlastingly bamboozled!" growled Coleman, as red as a goblet's crest. "It's Felix Boyd himself, or I'm a liar!"

Mr. Felix Boyd already was slouching around the nearest corner, and Coleman swung sharp on his heel and took the opposite direction, but promptly at 3 o'clock that afternoon, stirred with a little curiosity, he entered Boyd's office in Pine street.

He found Felix Boyd seated at his desk, stripped of his coat and vest, with his sleeves rolled to the elbows of his wiry, bare arms, and his disordered hair and furrowed brow indicating pro-

tracted study of some very perplexing problem.

The character of the problem was quite obvious, however. At Boyd's elbow stood a pot and brush, and on a blank slip of cardboard he had pasted the numerous fragments of paper collected that morning, carefully unling the irregular edges, much after the fashion of the broken picture puzzles of childhood days. Except where a small fragment was missing here and there, he thus was enabled to read the communication on the torn sheet, which had been written only on one side.

"Ah, Jimmie, is it you?" said he, looking up and reaching for his pipe. "Sit down and have a cigar. I'll take a breathing spell, now that you're here, and will let you into as curious a case as I ever tackled."

"It's curious indeed, then," remarked Coleman, drawing up a chair. "Were you at work on it this morning when—"

"When you threatened to run me in," interrupted Boyd, laughing.

"Well, only the Sabbath."

"Do you know either of them?"

"I have shadowed both and learned all that is possible of them without betraying my interest," replied Boyd.

The one who delivers the letters is a young man named Paul Cory. He lives with his mother in Brooklyn, and is said to be a lazy loafer, but with no other very evil habits."

"That's all enough."

"I have letter—that he delivers is received by the previous night."

"I have discovered that he does not open them. By intercepting a carrier, whom I warned against betraying me, I examined one of the letters before he delivered it at Cory's house."

"With what result?"

"It was properly addressed to Cory. But I discovered that a pin hole had been made in the lower right-hand corner of the envelope."

"A secret sign?"

"No doubt. Probably notifying Cory that the letter must not be opened by him, but delivered as usual next morning. Otherwise the cover was ordinarily plain, bearing the New York postmark."

"This looks like the work of crooks, Felix, for a fact," admitted Coleman.

"What of the other man?"

"His name is James Vaughn," replied Boyd. "He is a second-rate bartender, and lodges in this city. He has not been at work for several months. I am told, yet he appears to have ample money to meet his needs."

"That, too, looks suspicious."

"Decidedly so, Jimmie, hence I have been very circumspect in making my investigations. With the help of Terry, my office boy, I have shadowed both men until convinced that they have no meetings other than those mentioned. In fact, they appear in other respects to be entire strangers."

"It certainly looks as if there was some big game on," growled Coleman perplexedly. "Does Cory or Vaughn meet any other persons worthy of suspicion?"

"Not that I can discover."

"What does Vaughn do with the letter he receives from Cory?"

"I suspect that he mails a copy of it to some third party, possibly to the

chief director of their project, whatever it may be," replied Boyd. "By that precaution they may do without a rendezvous, which, in event of any danger, might expose the trail they obviously are aiming to cover."

"But why should he mail a copy of the letter?" inquired Coleman. "Why not mail the letter itself?"

"Probably another precaution, Jimmie, by which the sender of the letter makes a copy of it on a sheet of paper which he then carries with him, and by which he is provided. That having been carefully done, he destroys the original letter by igniting it at the cigar stand, pretending that he incidentally uses it to light his cigar."

"Do the saloon people know him, or anything about him?"

"I have not ventured any questions, Jimmie, lest my quarry might get wind of them and flee to cover. Being well on their trail, I cannot afford to lose the scent through any folly of my own. This morning, however, I contrived to outwit Mr. Vaughn."

"How so, Felix?"

"When he approached, as usual, to destroy the letter he had copied, one of which I have been decidedly eager to examine, he found the cigar-lighter extinguished. I had put it out while slipping a glass of beer. My scheme worked admirably. Instead of burning the letter, Vaughn tore it to fragments as he passed out into the street, and threw away the pieces about where you accosted me."

"Ah, I see," exclaimed Coleman approvingly. "Very like you, Felix, and very well done."

"It brings us down to this piece of patchwork," said Boyd, taking up the cardboard mentioned. "It has been a deuce of a job to match up these irregular fragments, partly owing to the curious character of the copy, and I had only just finished it when you entered. I think I now have it in shape to read, barring a few fragments that I could not find. Draw nearer, Jimmie, and we'll look at it."

The central office man complied, and for several minutes the two men grimly studied the odd communication. It read as follows, the occasional series of dots indicating the missing parts.

"Rdg. received. Now O. K. Capital work."

2.—One N. Y. C. 5 to 500. Same as Rdg."

3.—Penn. Cen. 2 of 3 to 300 each. One IV-X-1885. One VI-X-1887. Both to James . . . and . . . the usual . . . sfer to Co."

4.—These complete lot. When they are ready for . . . ou may begin to move the goods. . . . her still fine. Not a cloud in sight."

"Humph!" Coleman presently grunted. "I can't make much of that. It appears to refer to some kind of a deal in stocks, doesn't it?"

"Yes," muttered Boyd.

"How much study have you given it?"

"Just begun."

"Ah, is that so?"

"Um-m!"

"What do you make of it?"

"Now the voice of Mr. Felix Boyd appeared, for he made no answer whatever. With his brows knit, with his dilated eyes steadily growing brighter, he sat for several minutes studying the strange communication, much as if his life itself hung upon his power of perception. Coleman frequently had had occasion to marvel at this faculty in Felix Boyd, at times when his penetration appeared most like the result of some extraordinary intuition, and possibly it never was more forcibly exemplified than in the present case."

"For at the end of ten minutes Boyd broke the silence by exclaiming a deep breath and saying, with a voice so deliberate and strained that it evinced his intense mental application:

"It is more than a deal in stocks, Jimmie. It is a crime in stocks!"

"Good heavens!" growled Coleman, impulsively drawing nearer. "What have you discovered?"

"Wait a bit—not too fast, Jimmie! I will yet fathom it. Note this last item of the four comprising the letter. It cooks, Jimmie. Reference is made to Pennsylvania Central, to New York Central, and evidently to Reading. All are railroad stocks of high standard."

"Yes, yes, that's obvious," growled Coleman. "But what is the purpose of the Roman numerals, and the significance of the preceding figures—2 of 3 to 300 each?"

"Not once while replying had the gaze of Felix Boyd left the odd, patchwork sheet. His eyes, glowing with abnormal brilliancy, were fairly riveted upon it, and his cheeks had grown pale and his features drawn under the strain of his intense application. He caught up Coleman's question much as a hungry man might seize at food.

"Forgery—see!" he rejoined through his teeth. "2 of 3 to 300 each—see! It's a case of raising two Pennsylvania Central certificates of three shares each to three hundred each."

"Oh, by thunder, you're right!" cried Coleman, in irrepressible excitement. "And one New York Central from five to five hundred shares!"

# in the Trail of "Big Finger"

BY SCOTT CAMPBELL,  
Author of "Below the Dead-Line,"  
"The Doctor's Secret," etc.

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"The same as Reading—see! It says the same as Reading. The forgery of the Reading certificate already has been executed. Capital work—that refers to the forger's work. Now O. K. Something is now all right—but what? But what? It must refer to the Reading certificate—possibly to the negotiation of the forgery," cried Boyd, now speaking with the rapidity and vehemence of a man whose brain was in a riot.

"But the Roman numerals—what of them?"

"Dates, Jimmie, as plain as the nose on your face," cried Boyd. "The dates to be inserted in the forged certificates when raised from three shares to 300, VI-X-1885. That's Oct. 6, 1886. The others have the same significance. But why does the writer of this want the forged certificates sent to him, as evidently was done with the Reading? The game still is blind to me—stay! What it, each filled in with a forgery to some company or corporation. Oh, ho, I see it now! The game is as plain as two times two. The assets of the corporation consist of big blocks of railroad stocks, the certificates of which are kept in the vault month after month."

"The scheme is to raise small certificates to correspond with the genuine ones, then deposit them in place of the latter to guard against immediate detection, and then convert the genuine certificates into cash. This should give the rascals the interval between their scheme and converting the genuine certificates, as well as to cover their tracks and get out of the country. That's what this writer means by moving the goods when all are ready. He is a man identified with the company, and one who has access to the securities in the vault."

"As I said as death and taxes, Felix," cried Coleman. "Once more you have hit the nail on the head."

"I am confident of it, Jimmie."

"If we had only the entire name of the man mentioned in this—"

"Star! His first name is James—see the four letters?" cried Boyd.

"Sure!"

"And the last—it might be Alexander. No, no, that, it cannot be that. There are letters missing at both ends of the final name. Oh, for those lost fragments! James—under! under! under! Oh, by all the gods, I have it, Jimmie! James K. Vanderlift, the treasurer of the Ironclad Insurance company—and one of my own clients!"

"Eureka!" roared Coleman, leaping to his feet.

"Steady, Jimmie, dear fellow," said Mr. Felix Boyd, rising. "No more excitement, for the game still has a ragged look. Within thirty minutes, however, the hand that penned this letter shall be in brackets."

II.

Of the integrity of Mr. James K. Vanderlift there could be no doubt, and in due time he was on the right track, and Boyd knew that he was taking no

chances. Yet when he and Jimmie Coleman entered the superb quarters of the great Ironclad Insurance company both were very carefully disguised. It was an expedient adopted only in event that the final recipient of the crypto communication sent out from these offices, of whose crafty precautions Boyd already had seen sufficient evidence, might then have the insurance building under the watchful eye of some capable spy.

Mr. Vanderlift, a venerable gentleman of 70, was in his private office when informed that two men, representatives of a large London office, in the same line, desired an interview with him. This information, sent in through a clerk, promptly opened the way for Boyd and his companion.

"Dear Mr. gentleman," very glad to see you," said Mr. Vanderlift, with an artless stare at them through his gold-bowed spectacles. "Pray be seated. From London, do I understand? Have you sent in your cards?"

"Here is my card, Mr. Vanderlift."

Boyd quietly interposed, having made sure that the doors were closed. "I think you will recall my name when you—Careful! Not too loud, my dear sir! Our mission is a delicate one, and the walls may have ears."

"Good heavens!" gasped the startled old gentleman. "You're not really Felix Boyd?"

"Very really, sir," said Boyd, laughing softly. "And my friend is Detective Coleman of the central office."

"Goodness gracious! Dear me! Why are you here, Boyd, in this fashion?"

"You know for what my contract with you calls," replied Boyd, somewhat pointedly. "I want a brief interview with you, Mr. Vanderlift, to begin with, I will say that your obvious apprehensions possibly may be entirely groundless. Sit down at your desk, sir, and give me your attention. Take the chair, please, Jimmie, in case—Ah, well, we shall see! Now, Mr. Vanderlift, I will tell you why I am here."

"If you please, Mr. Boyd," was the reply, with the grave composure which, under such circumstances, invariably denotes the gentleman.

"I have reason to suspect, Mr. Vanderlift, that your company now stands in a way to be seriously victimized by a very craftily planned robbery."